

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

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Stop Nuclear Sharing Now

By JOHN LaFORGE

My friend Carl Kabat—who died in August at the age of eighty-eight after committing most of his adult life to condemning and acting against nuclear weapons—dismissed international agreements about nuclear weapons. He called them “numbers treaties.” His point was that accords that allow for limited nuclear weapons never fairly condemned or delegitimized them. None of the bargains said thermonuclear weapons were “the ultimate evil,” as Justice Weeramantry of the International Court of Justice did in 1996. None of the treaties stigmatized the bomb as contraband, inhumane, unlawful or criminal until the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which has entered into force in spite of relentless and blatantly hypocritical objections from the nuclear weapons states.

Except for the TPNW, the “numbers treaties” have always provided legitimacy and legalistic protection to nuclear weapons and granted a seemingly lofty status to the states that possessed and threatened to use them. Witness the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—the US, China, the UK, Russia and France. All of them maintain vast nuclear weapons systems and routinely declare their continuous readiness to attack with them, calling this very real terrorism “deterrence.”

Today, as they did in 2015, these nuclear weapons states have prevented agreement on a final document by the Review Conference for the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) which just concluded in New York.

Cesar Jaramillo, writing for Project Ploughshares, said, “A cloud of discontent and frustration descended upon the conference as it neared its end. Several non-nuclear weapon states protested that their proposals were largely ignored in successive drafts of the final document, while most concerns of nuclear weapons states were accommodated. While nuclear weapons states and their allies continue to frame nuclear weapons as a supreme security guarantee, the rest of the [world] considers them the primary threat to security and stability.... [T]he essential divide was that non-nuclear weapons states wanted to chart a credible path to nuclear disarmament with concrete commitments and good faith implementation, while nuclear weapons states wanted to maintain the status quo.”

But “the status quo is simply not an option,” the representative of Austria had said, according to Ray Acheson who reported from the United Nations for Reaching Critical Will. “We cannot prepare for nuclear catastrophe,” Austria said. “What we cannot prepare for we must prevent. We cannot afford to wait.”



Rita Corbin



Fritz Eichenberg

At the end of the month-long conference, Acheson justifiably lambasted the nuclearists' obstruction of the final statement, writing, “All of the nuclear-armed states approach nuclear disarmament as something that will hurt them. They seem to perceive non-nuclear armed states as demanding actions that will result in an existential threat to their survival as states.... But for the non-nuclear armed states—the ones that are not in military alliances that include nuclear weapons in their security doctrines—nuclear disarmament is one of the best ways to help increase global security. And it is the only thing that will prevent the use of nuclear weapons, end the vast expenditure on modernization, and end the risks of nuclear war.”

I attended the first week of NPT Review Conference meetings in New York with Marion Küpker, mostly out of interest in how “nuclear sharing” is perceived by UN member states. Nuclear sharing is the unique US practice of transferring nuclear weapons to Italy, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Turkey, and forward basing them there, the better to threaten Russia. In Germany, preparations and routine rehearsals for attacks with US B61 H-bombs are conducted by Büchel Air Force Base's 33rd Fighter-Bomber Wing with the support of the US Air Force 702nd Munitions Support Squadron, as is often reported. Recent headlines included: “NATO Holds Secret Nuclear War Exercises in Germany,”

“German Air Force Training for Nuclear War as Part of NATO,” and “NATO Nuclear Weapons Exercise Steadfast Noon in Büchel.”

Rhetorical sparks did fly over this issue when China's representative to the Review Conference boldly said that US nuclear sharing violated the NPT's Articles I and II, which explicitly prohibit any and all transfers of nuclear weapons to other countries. Germany's Ambassador Thomas Goebel sent a written reply August 4th to what he called “unfounded accusations by a States party that NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements are in breach of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty,” but went on to openly concede that nuclear sharing arrangements “include US nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe and Dual-Capable Aircraft provided by a number of European Allies.” Ambassador Goebel's letter then asserted that “these arrangements were put in place well before the NPT entered into force in 1970” and “fully conform with Articles I and II of the NPT.”

The absurdity of Germany's position is like a 19th century slaver saying he could keep his enslaved people in chains because he purchased them before the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. And like slavery, child labor, capital punishment and torture, nuclear weapons will have to be resisted and acted against even after the numbers treaties have zeroed them out.

God's Beauty and Variety

By DOROTHY DAY

[Excerpted from “On Pilgrimage,” *The Catholic Worker*, November 1958—Eds. Note]

As I write this Sunday afternoon on the Feast of Christ the King, the rain pours down and the streets are deserted. Across the street the plane trees are dropping yellow leaves in addition to rain drops. Across the street also huge beams two feet thick are piled, and one side of our house has been newly shored up. Holes are being dug around us, and engineers come in asking us when we are going to get out. When they start tearing down the house next door, our own house is liable to collapse. More engineers carrying drills and other mysterious machinery are to be seen every day going around in back of the house, behind the wall, into the yard behind the Chateau Gardens, which used to be St. Augustine's Church, where a jazz band blares in what once was the sanctuary, and where, when the church was Russian Orthodox, the Blessed Sacrament rested....

This afternoon, the sitting room smells of the apples which fill a huge bowl on the table. Smokey peels his and pares them and eats them quartered. Every man on the soup line has been getting an apple with his bean soup and bread, thanks to Maryknoll. When we see their big truck pull up, we bless them for the gifts they bring, an expression of love on their part for their brothers on the line. They brought enough this last time for us to bring some crates to the farm to be made into apple sauce. God bless them all at Maryknoll....

Due to a bad case of conjunctivitis, I spent some weeks of the month in the country. When Charlie McCormack was around, he used to look at me with lifted eyebrow and echo, “Country?” meaning that Staten Island was after all part of New York City. Actually it is far more country than Newburgh was. There rich old houses lined route 17K so that it looked like a suburb. Also, it was seldom that one saw anyone walking. Here on the island there is so little traffic that one can walk or bicycle and go mushrooming through the woods, walking for miles without encountering a soul, at the south end of the island. Whenever I see men walking along with double shopping bags, coming out of the woods, I know what they have been doing, and stop them and ask them if they have had any luck. One way to learn to know the edible varieties is to go out with them, or to look over their “catch.” Last week two old fellows showed me a very large grey mushroom shirred and scalloped in clusters, weighing, they said, about two pounds. Some of the mushroom pickers are Italian, some Ukrainian, and many drive over from nearby Jersey, coming from Perth Amboy.

Yesterday I was listening to a discussion on the radio of how they are processing the potato crop, setting up potato-flake plants in Maine, the Dakotas and so forth. No longer are they going to dump potatoes or dye them for animal feed consumption, giving them to farmers for pigs but forbidding them to humans, in some mad governmental policy. According to the broadcast, only eleven percent of the population live on the land, and all the rest of the population use processed foods, so that there is less and less processing

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MARYHOUSE

By BEN STEGBAUER

By far the funniest part of being a Catholic Worker here in the city is what I like to call phantom door-knocking syndrome. If you sit in the kitchen, at least twice a shift the person "on the house" will come walking back through the dining room with a confused grin on their face, a shaking head, and whispering to themselves, "Damn, I could've sworn I heard a knock? What has this place done to me?" It will happen night or day. Labeling papers in the auditorium you'll see people peer into the doorway just to check if someone is there. (It turns out being a Catholic Worker not only takes years off your back, but your neck too.) Just the other night some wind blew a rock at my second floor window, and I rolled out of bed thinking, why would someone come by at this hour? It took about ten seconds for me to realize that my window is not a door.

I am fascinated by this concept of the door. A couple of shifts into my time here I had probably heard the phrase "you have to listen for the door," more times than copies of this paper get mailed out. But, in a way that's all that I've done here. Perhaps it's the heart of what we do here at Maryhouse on the Lower East Side. We listen for the door. At St. Joe's two blocks south they have a window. It serves the same purpose and sits within the same symbolism: "You gotta watch the window." For houses of hospitality perhaps it is the door that is the most important piece of architecture. The keystone in the arch. Without it, the house's claim of hospitality is nothing but a farce.

Entire lifestyles have been crafted by the concept and call of the door. When I am sitting by the door I often think of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez SJ, who could quite easily be called the greatest porter of all time, answering that door in Majorca, Spain with a jolly plea, "Ahh Lord, here I come." The great 19th century Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins ended his poem in honor of Alphonsus with the two lines: "Those years and years by of world without event/ that in Majorca Alfonso watched the door." The only time I've seen a priest cry during Mass was when he was reading that poem on Alphonsus' feast day. Even after only a month and half, I have been faced with the frank reality that watching the door is a simple, patient, and yet grueling activity—one that people have spent entire lives trying to perfect. Simple work, but perhaps quite holy. It is clear it comes with a toll, and perhaps that is why that priest shed tears.

From what I have observed so far, watching the door is also symbolic work. Watching the door also means making sure there is food for the door. So, cooking in the kitchen gets wrapped up into the door. The CW paper needs

to go out the door, so labeling and rolling is a form of door watching, too. Here at Maryhouse people "watch the door," in a variety of ways. They do their part to keep this house hospitable. To make sure that the door never becomes a paranoid door with surveillance technology or a twenty pound padlock, but instead one that stays ready and open. Jane watches the door by answering the phone and welcoming visitors. Cathy watches the door by making her special chicken noodle soup that fills the house with a savory aroma. Carla watches the door by folding and labeling papers and yelling greetings at every friendly face. Amy always exclaims your name and notices when you look tired and offers to finish out your shift. Bill rolls papers and gives out books. Felton puts up the canopy outside and gets the water as cold as possible. Tess organizes and reorganizes the clothing room with incredible care and makes sure the house eats its vegetables. Martha sweeps the front steps and always asks how you're holding up. Trevor steams potatoes, makes sure the crossword is completed, and explains how every vegetable could get pureed into a sauce. Jessica labels into ungodly late hours a couple days a week. David makes sure the labels for the paper get printed. Theresa knows the perfect timing for a joke and the perfect amount of food for Boots the cat. Joanne watches the door by knowing the phone number of the cheapest roof specialists. John likes to sit right outside the door in between bouts of sweeping the floor. Domino makes sure the kitchen is clean as can be before everyone else rises. Bernie watches the door by always giving a soft listening ear, with a slight head tilt and nod as well. I've tried watching the door by washing the dishes, after mild Covid-19 outbreak I have since been relegated to other forms of door watching.

It seems the only rule I've been told so far in my forty-two days here is: "Always keep an ear out for the door." Always. Watch it with so much care that you will often hear the door when no one is there. You will smirk and nod and question how much longer you can stay here, but at least you will always be ready. I like watching the door. It may not build power. It may not be revolutionary. It may not flip the world upside down. But it is necessary work. It is work done with disciplined patience. Work that pushes you to never be surprised but to always be open to endless possibilities of who or what could come through the door. Perhaps if Hopkins were still around he'd write: "Years and years went by with countless fights and disagreements, but still in the East Village Workers watched the door." ❖

The Legacy of Dorothy Day

By ROBERT ELLSBERG

[Excerpted from a speech given November 29, 2020—Eds. Note]

Many people associate Dorothy with dramatic actions on the public stage—walking on picket lines; refusing to take shelter during compulsory civil defense drills during the 1950s, resulting in regular stints in jail; standing beside young men who were burning their draft cards during the Vietnam War; or being arrested for the last time, at the age of seventy-five, when she picketed with the United Farmworkers in California....

Of course we also associate Dorothy with the daily work of the Catholic Worker: putting out a newspaper, living among the poor, practicing the Works of Mercy—feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, comforting the sorrowful and afflicted.

But reading and editing her diaries showed me that those activities were only the public face of a life that was mostly spent—as it is for all great souls, as well as the rest of us—in very ordinary and undramatic activities. And it was especially in that realm of ordinary daily life that she expressed her spirituality and found her path to holiness.

In this she was particularly inspired by a favorite saint, Thérèse of Lisieux, who taught what she called the Little Way—the idea that our ordinary duties and encounters, expressed in a spirit of love and in the presence of God, were actually the principal arena for holiness. That is the way it was for Dorothy—the daily exercise of patience, forgiveness, generosity and unselfishness, the struggle to curb her anger and her tendency to judgment—that was the real crucible of her holiness....

In the spiritual discipline of daily life she found the courage and strength to demonstrate her faith in the public sphere. And, of course she believed in the social implications of Thérèse's Little Way—the power of small gestures: the protests we make or fail to make; looking foolish by standing on a street corner with a sign for Peace; refusing to take shelter during a civil defense raid. These were the loaves and fishes; we could only offer the little faith and courage and hope that we possess and trust that God would make the increase. That is the way it is with saints; it is the struggle to be faithful in small things that prepares the way for faithfulness in large matters....

For Dorothy, all of life was a school of charity and gratitude: "There is desperate suffering with no prospect of relief. But we would be contributing to the misery and desperation of the world if we failed to rejoice in the sun, the moon and the stars, in the rivers which surround this island on which we live, in the cool breezes of the bay, in what food we have and in the benefactors God sends us."

She had a great spirit of adventure. She was always ready for something new—whether starting a house of hospitality for women, or standing up to the IRS when they took her to task for refusing to pay federal income taxes for war. When an exasperated IRS agent asked her to estimate how much she owed in taxes, she replied, "Why don't you just tell me what you think I owe, and then I just won't pay it."

Regardless of how old she became, there was always a youthfulness to her. She loved the idealism and energy of young people, and what she called their "instinct for the heroic."

She loved conversation around the kitchen table and sharing stories from her long life in the Church and the radical movement. **The Long Loneliness** ends with a meditation where she says "we were just sitting around talking" when everything happened—when Peter Maurin came in; when lines of people began to form; when someone said, "Let's all go and live on a farm." She says, "It was as casual as all that, I often think. It just came

about. It just happened."

That is one of the things you had to experience for yourself, being around Dorothy. The unexpected things that could begin in a conversation as you just sat around talking—the way that history or your own life could suddenly take a turn as you were just sitting around the kitchen table over a cup of coffee or a bowl of soup.

And she herself was always ready to be inspired and renewed. In her diary she wrote, "No matter how old I get... no matter how feeble, short of breath, incapable of walking more than a few blocks... with all these symptoms of age and decrepitude, my heart can still leap for joy as I read and suddenly assent to some great truth enunciated by some great mind and heart."

And that leads me to one last thing—and this comes as a surprise to many people who only know her through her door image in photographs—and that is how much fun it was to be with her. She had a tremendous sense of humor, and a youthful laugh.... When you were with Dorothy you felt that you wanted to be a better person—and that you could be a better person—and that it would be tremendous fun and a great adventure to be a better person....

Dorothy modeled a new form of holiness by joining the practice of charity with the struggle for justice. As a young person she recognized this need for a new kind of saintliness when she asked, "Where were the saints to change the social order, not just to minister to the slaves but to do away with slavery?" It is a question she answered with her own life. Because of Dorothy, we would not have to ask where were the saints to change the social order....

And she did all this as a lay person, as a woman, whose conversion was prompted by the experience of pregnancy, who had experienced the joys and anguish of family life, and the struggles of maintaining a large and raucous community.... In words that speak to this moment, Dorothy concluded her memoir: "We have all known the long loneliness, and we have learned that the only solution is love, and that love comes with community. It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on." ❖

God's Beauty and Variety

(continued from page 1)

in the home. The South leads with the daily baking of corn bread.

I must laugh when I hear these figures. Thomas Woodlock of **The Wall Street Journal** told me once that you can make figures tell any tale you wish. He did not trust statistics. All around us we see garden patches, as well as big truck farms, and the mushroom hunters and the fishermen and the do-it-yourself crowd give the lie to this.

Speaking of fishing, there was one delightful day when we walked along the shore at low tide and saw a seagull making vain attempts to pick up a large sea bass he had found in a deep pool. He got it out of the pool for a few feet and dropped it among the rocks where we could see it leaping. We had no compunction about stealing that juicy morsel from the seagull. It was big enough for a helping to serve three of us, including Jimmy Hughes who will eat anything, venturesome soul, including eel.

Reading Malcolm Cowley's "Time of the Rhetoricians" in **New World Writing**, he says that "the central function of literature is to broaden or deepen our sense of life." Under this definition fall such books as **The Sea Around Us** and **Under the Sea Winds** by Rachel Carson, and N. J. Berrill's **The Living Tide**, all of them in paperback now. There is a great deal in the second book about sea birds and eels, and in the Berrill book there is a long discussion of the horseshoe crab which is called *Limulus* and is not a crab at all, but the oldest living animal, unchanged for hundreds of millions of years. "The fact of

the horseshoe crab in relation to ourselves, is of interest to the scientist," Berrill says. First of all, its fantastic antiquity makes it an object of worldwide inquiry, and then, why has it not changed and developed as man has, the scientists ask. Man himself, according to their theories, comes from the sea as does all life.

The problem of evolution has never bothered me, nor the exact time when "God breathed into man a living soul." It was the observation of these beauties along the sea shore that brought me to a stunned recognition of God as creator of infinite beauty and variety. "From the foundations of the world men have caught sight of His invisible nature, His eternal power and His divineness, as they are known through His creatures." (Romans 1:20)

When the slime of corruption seems to cover the pavements of the city in the slums, in the steady rain of the last week—it is a relief to go the few miles on the five cent ferry over to the island, and down to the beach where there is the rich life of the shore. Out on the calm bay there are fishing boats, with their crows' nests out for menhaden, a fish which is not good for eating but for many, other things like fish oil and fish meal. I do not know what use is made of the seaweed around this section, but further up in New England it is gathered for paint, shoe polish, cosmetics, puddings, chocolate syrup and other foods. Occasionally in the early summer menhaden are washed up in great numbers on the beach, floundering about and dying by the hundreds. I do not know whether this is due to some plague in the water, manmade or not, or whether they have been spawning and dying as some other fish do.

Baron von Hügel writes that we should have interests on different levels to relieve the tension in our lives. And only the other day I saw an article in the evening paper on knitting as a tranquilizer. The study of sea weeds and other aspects of shore life, and knitting too, have given me great relief in these times of stress. I almost forget the holes that are being dug around us, the imminent collapse of our building, and come to myself with a start and go out hunting again, investigating stoves and plumbing fixtures for the loft. "They," holy mother the City, have even taken our good kitchen stove, and we must buy another.

Anyway, we repeat, we may have a loft, a day shelter, the bare bones of a place, but there is no place yet to sleep. We are looking for a miracle in the way of an apartment, three or four apartments in the same house, within our means. A miracle indeed. St. Thérèse, St. Anthony, St. Joseph (to go back through time) will be looking out for us we are sure. And our guardian angels! ❖



Ade Bethune

Workers United at Starbucks

By BILL GRIFFIN

Starbucks workers who want to organize a labor union are facing cutthroat pushback from the corporation's chief executive officer, Howard Schultz, and his managers. Starbucks workers, known as "partners" in the corporation's mendaciously egalitarian jargon, have organized an unionization drive which has recently been very successful. Beginning with its first victory in Buffalo, New York, Workers United, the union representing the baristas has gone on to win 200 out of the 250 official National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) supervised elections. There are currently 300 more petitions for elections by Starbucks workers which are being considered by the NLRB.

The tide is evidently turning. On August 16th *The New York Times* reported that relations between Workers United and Starbucks were very polarized because of the latter's uncompromising refusal to listen to its workers' needs. One of their key demands is for regular work schedules so that they can plan more stable lives around raising their families or attending school. By August, workers have gone out on strike fifty-five times in seventeen states. The latest strike action took place on August 15th, when workers at six Starbucks in Eugene, Oregon simultaneously walked off the job.

The very financially successful Starbucks corporation manages roughly 9,000 coffee shops nationwide. The corporation's leadership has, thus far, reacted to this remarkable union movement in a variety of underhanded ways. Its latest move has been to send a letter to the NLRB accusing it of having unfairly coordinated elections with Workers United. The letter demands that all future elections be postponed until an independent investigation is carried out. Starbucks is also alleging special voting arrangements were given to some workers and not to others.

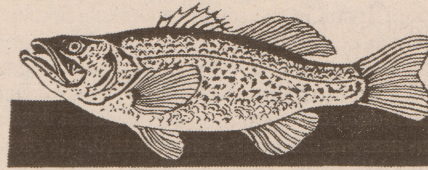
According to Michelle Eisen who works at the Elmwood location in Buffalo, NY, the first unionized company-owned store, "Starbucks is simultaneously claiming to stand for voter protection and then asking that all elections be suspended. This is hypocrisy at its finest." John Logan, a labor professor at San Francisco State, supports this analysis: "So often with Starbucks the complaint or the appeal is the point. When there's hundreds of elections—they've conducted well over 250 elections and over 300 petitions—people can make mistakes without the intention of swinging the election to the union or against the union."

Besides the letter to the NLRB, the other, more insidious and dishonest tactic of Starbucks is to selectively close any of their coffee shops where union organizing is taking place. On August 23rd *Reuters* reported Chief Executive Officer, Howard Schultz, said in a leaked video on Twitter that the company was shuttering cafes due to safety issues, including crime and homelessness. The personal safety of baristas was his chief concern, he claimed. Workers United has countered that claim with its own study which points out that 42% of the nineteen Starbucks which have been closed down so far were in the midst of an active unionization effort. In the leaked video Howard Schultz said further, "We are facing things, which the stores were not built for. There are going to be many more closures." Josh Crowell, a worker at the recently closed Kansas City Starbucks, one of the busiest in that city, is quoted as well in the *Reuters* dispatch, pointing out that, "Shutting down stores doesn't make anyone safer—it just makes it harder to pay rent."

The New York Times reported on September 2nd that the board of directors of Starbucks is replacing their innovative founder and longtime leader, Howard Schultz. His strident anti-union paternalism ("We don't believe a third party should lead our people") and his recent, provocative order to give sub-

stantial raises to all non-union workers, while denying them to Workers United members with equal seniority were, perhaps, seen as harmful obstacles to reconciliation.

The ongoing Starbucks labor conflict calls for a free and mutually respectful dialogue in order to work out a resolution that is beneficial to all. So, we shall continue to hope. ❖



Ade Bethune

THE RAIN OF GOD

Taos, New Mexico

Dear Joanne,

Hello my dear friend and beloved editor.

The Global Peace Walk and the Rio Grande Water Walk teamed up for a bigger pedestrian pilgrimage project, walking from Santa Fe, New Mexico to the headwaters of the Rio Grande in hopes of bringing some justice to this iconic southwestern waterway, which like so many of the water systems in the North American West is under severe duress due to drought, wildfires, privatization, pollution, poisoning, abuse, misuse and overuse. The other inspiration for the walk was Leonard Peltier. His incarceration has lasted more than forty years. In many ways he is emblematic of the persecution of the Indigenous communities by the federal government and a reminder of their resistance. He sent us an inspired prayer message from prison thanking us for stepping up and standing strong for the earth and waters.

We started at Rosario Cemetery where two Japanese people who were interned at a camp in Santa Fe during World War II have gravesites. Rev. Yusen Yamato, a Buddhist monk from Japan, Indigenous led a ceremony supported by drummers before we began our walk. He is the only known Japanese citizen to have endured the traditional Sundance ceremony, having been pierced and strung up four times. This is a big part of how he earned the trust, respect and friendship of many Native American communities and individuals across New Mexico and the Americas. Yamato, who was born right after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has been on this peace mission since his youth. Standing next to him was Bobby Valdez, a Laguna Pueblo elder and the American Indian Movement (AIM) Albuquerque Grassroots president. Bobby brought forth the prayerful power of his people in their native tongue. And Steve Romero, a young leader from the Taos Pueblo brought prayer from his community, the oldest continuous habitation of humans in North America.

The days of running and walking nearly 150 miles were filled with determination and courage. And, of course, beauty—of the human soul and the world around us. As we crested the final rise into Taos, it was into a circle of cheering friends and supporters: folks from AIM, the Leonard Peltier Family, Indigenous communities and the Global Peace Walk. The Rio Grande Water Walk bus came later for a much appreciated ride home. The well-wishers gave us food, assorted liquid refreshments and gifts, including bundles of white sage and Leonard Peltier t-shirts and other blessings as well. The singers formed a drum circle and we had a closing ceremony. Afterward, Torin, the chiseled, fire-hardened warrior came over and shook my hand. He had been aloof earlier on the walk, but as he thanked me for being part of the walk, waves of healing and benevolence cascaded over me.

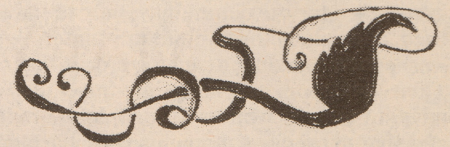
Our hope was to make it to Creede, Colorado, but due to the breakdown of the support vehicles and the breakdown of interpersonal communications almost everybody concluded the walk just north of Taos. Everybody, but me. Having trained for some three odd decades, I was able to carry my food, water, art supplies and personal stuff on my back and live by faith. Forgive me if that sounds like self-promotion, but it is rather a practical assessment of some hard physical realities. In

fact, I realize it was really a scouting mission for future walks. But this is the thing and here comes the miraculous response from on high to our efforts. God brought the rain to Taos and the San Luis Valley. Abundant monsoons have since fallen on the land. Also, another privatization effort to buy the water from the San Luis Valley for the golf courses in Douglass County failed. Douglass Co. and their deep pockets got scared or shamed and pulled out. Was it collective consciousness that woke up and exposed the nefarious efforts? Who knows? But remember that line from the great anarchist movie *V is for Vendetta*: "God is in the rain."

Another answer God gave gradually was the connections I made going up the line—a spiritual prayer network. And to top it all off the fiftieth Rainbow Gathering happened north of Craig, Colorado. Man alive, when it rains it pours. The rain that hit up there was strategic, knocking down the threat of fire. So, the Indigenous prayer run was a jewel at the center.

I am learning to be a nomadic writer as well as a painter. God Bless you my friend. Keep the faith and keep praying.

Peace,
Dmitri Kadiev



Kate Crowley

THERESA HARRIGAN

By JOANNE MALLESCH

Theresa Harrigan died at sixty-three years old on the morning of July 6, 2022 at Bellevue Hospital in NYC when her remaining kidney failed and sent her on her way to her reward. A reward much deserved, as life was not always kind to Theresa.

She endured a childhood shuffled between one group home to the next until the age of eighteen when the system was finished with her and she was sent into a city that can swallow up even the toughest of us.

But Theresa's difficult path did lead her to the safe haven of the Catholic Worker, where she could always count on a warm meal and warm friends who loved her. It was there that I met her back in 2002 when I lived at St. Joseph House during a time of my own difficulties. She was one of the people who helped make my adjustment easier and eased my awkwardness in my new unfamiliar surroundings.

And it was always that way with Theresa. It was easy to be around her whether she was having a good day or a bad one. On a good day, she would greet me with a huge smile and a big hello and go on to tell me what was happening in her world. If she was having a not so great day, like a child, she'd tell you the brutal truth. Her childlike quality was endearing and it prompted a parental feeling towards her that made it a joy to meet her requests for a box of Pringles or a pack of chewing gum.

I remember inviting her to join me at meetings and she would come along from time to time. My friends there thought she was a delight and asked after her when she wasn't with me. Their asking was testament to the fact that Theresa was a joy to all who got to know her even if just a little bit. Her bright smile and good nature were uplifting to all for sure.

Over the years I would hear from her intermittently and, as with most separations by relocation, the calls became less and less. But recently, this spring, we were reconnected and it was so good to be part of her life during her last months. I feel so blessed for that time with her and I hope she is smiling that beautiful smile of hers ever and always now. ❖

PEGGY SCHERER 1949-2022

I met Peggy when I attended a Peacemaker Conference that she was coordinating at the Tivoli CW farm in 1974. Peggy and I became fast friends and decided to stay on at Tivoli and help out with the farm. It was a beautiful, exciting, crazy place with many interesting people and sat up on the banks of the Hudson River. Peggy's sense of community, fairness, work and fun were infectious and her quiet strength and confidence were amazing to me. I was very shy back then.

I followed her lead to work with Andy and Tony on the barn building. She would measure and Cathy, Mary Jo, many others and I would cut and nail—the barn came out beautifully. Tending to the goats, milking them and leading them to the upper pastures, past the gardens and Toby's dogs was a challenge, but we learned together and took turns gathering them up. She always had my back. Harvesting some of the two hundred tomato plants Tony Equale planted to make sauce and send to the city for soup often turned into a late night adventure. We worked together with many others, pruning and harvesting a donated vineyard to raise money for the farm and to can many jars of grape juice for the community, only to have them all explode throughout the winter. We learned more about the canning process later. There isn't room here to go into the endless adventures and wonderful people we met and shared precious moments with: Farmer John, Stanley Vishnewski, the Corbins, Tamar, Dorothy. Peggy's strong work ethic and sense of goodness warmed Dorothy's heart.

As a friend, Peggy never competed or made me feel less than, or not enough. It was always a shared sense of camaraderie and let's go together! She taught me hitch-hiking as a viable means of transportation (relatively safe back then). Once she seemed to will a big semi-truck to stop for us when I asked if she ever rode in one. The driver was very kind and took us a long way. We had great adventures hitchhiking cross-country and back.

I do and will miss Peggy!! Her sense of loyalty and caring for us all. Her sense of knowing and doing what is kind and right, even when it is hard. Her sense of fun and play and pulling me along to enjoy!! What a gift to meet Peggy!! One of those special bright spots in my life!! She opened my life to many wonderful adventures and life-long friendships. Thank you Peggy, you will be missed!!

—Terri Antholzner

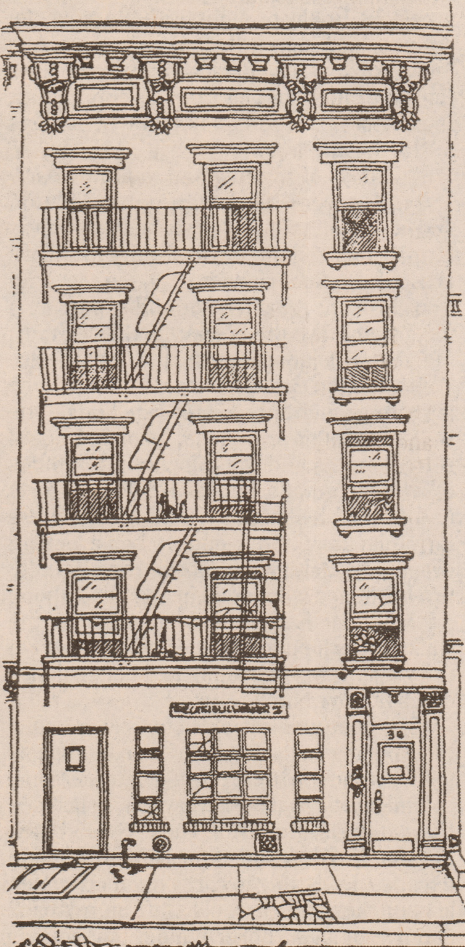
Not long after I became a part of the New York Catholic Worker community in June of 1975, I met Peggy who was then living at the farm in Tivoli, New York. Our friendship grew quickly into one of mutual respect and, more importantly, a trust of one another that led us on some wonderful adventures. Peggy was an experienced farmer, and I was not. However, that didn't keep Peggy from asking me one very cold winter night to join her in checking in on one of the goats that was close to giving birth. With a kerosene lantern in hand, we sat in the barn and watched as the new baby goats were born.

I admit that I was a tad anxious about what we were going to have to do, but Peggy, with her calm and reassuring manner, told me that the mother goat was doing the job just fine without our assistance and all we had to do was name each new goat. Since we both had recently read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Colombian author, Gabriel García Márquez, we chose to name the goats after several of the novel's characters. When a tiny goat with all black fur and a white star on his forehead arrived, I proudly declared that he would be known as José. During a subsequent visit to the farm, Peggy asked me to help her cook supper for the community and told me that she had taken goat meat out of the freezer. I soon felt somewhat queasy when I realized that we would be eating José that night. I shared these feelings with Peggy which led her to give me a crash course in animal husbandry.

Another time Peggy and I were talking about our shared interest in learning Spanish and experiencing some of the cultures of Latin America, so Peggy proposed that we hitchhike to Cochabamba, Bolivia, to study Spanish and in the meantime take a Spanish class at The New School here in NYC. When I asked her how we were going to afford that since we each only had \$5 per week of "ice cream money" from the Catholic Worker, she explained that we would go and introduce ourselves to the professor, explain our plans, and ask him if we could just sit in on the class for free. He agreed.

We never made it to Bolivia. My mother died unexpectedly that year and I didn't want to be that far away from my family in Michigan. Peggy found another travel companion and made it as far as Huehuetenango, Guatemala where she lived with a local family and learned to speak Spanish. It was during this time that Dorothy decided that it was time to sell the CW farm in Tivoli and purchase a smaller and more manageable farm. I wrote to Peggy and asked her if she was interested in returning to coordinate all that needed to be done for such a move. Having excellent organizational skills, Peggy returned and it was primarily due to her that a search was conducted and we ended up with a new farm, Peter Maurin Farm, which to this day operates in Marlboro, New York.

In 1978, I was asked to take over the job of managing editor of *The Catholic Worker*. I lasted six issues and, feeling I was in way over my head, I called Peggy at Tivoli for help. For the longest time I remembered it as a call to ask Peggy to co-edit the paper with me. It was only in recent years that Peggy reminded me that my plan was to resign and dump it on her and that she instead suggested we do it together. Teamwork—a very Peggy approach to a problem. Dorothy agreed which led to three wonderful years of collaborating on putting the paper together. During one of our last phone conversations, Peggy recalled how much she enjoyed the teamwork, especially choosing artwork for the paper. It was during this time that Peggy and I worked with Fritz and Toni Eichenberg to produce a beautiful portfolio of Fritz's wood engravings for interested readers of *The Catholic Worker*. It was also the time when we knew that Dorothy wouldn't be with us much longer.



Gary Donatelli

Peggy Scherer, former managing editor of *The Catholic Worker* and a mainstay of life at the farm in Tivoli and at St. Joseph House for twelve years in the 1970s and 80s, died after a brief illness on June 19, 2022 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The following are remembrances of Peggy by some family members and friends, as well as an excerpt from her own writing. We are grateful for all that Peggy did to nurture, challenge and inspire the New York Catholic Worker. Deo Gratias.

I recently reread an announcement regarding Dorothy's death that appeared on the front page of the December, 1980 issue of the paper. Though it was signed by both of us, Peggy wrote it. Looking at Peggy's writing, I was struck by how much of what she wrote about Dorothy could now be said of Peggy.

Peggy had no illusions that the road of faith would not be trying and lonely at times. I've had the opportunity to look through many of Peggy's personal papers that will be sent to *The Catholic Worker* archives at Marquette University, and I could feel some of Peggy's heartache when she made the decision to leave the Catholic Worker for new adventures. It occurred during a troubled time at the New York CW, when Peggy's concerns about LGBT issues and how they could be included in the newspaper clashed with the views of some others. But dear Peggy moved on in life, always looking for ways to build a world where it would be easier for people to be good.

—Dan Mauk

One of the best gifts of the Catholic Worker is lifelong friends. Peggy and I were friends, co-workers, neighbors and traveling companions for over forty years. The last time I saw her was just a few months ago at Bill Barrett's funeral. We decided to write his obituary together (See *The Catholic Worker*, Aug-Sept, 2022). Peggy lived for six years at the Tivoli farm and then spent another six years at Saint Joseph House as an editor of the paper.

She had many skills—goatherder, barn builder, organizer of chaos, and Dorothy Day's chauffeur in the farm's old clunkers. Before it became in fashion, she installed a composing toilet in Dorothy's beach house. When it was time to move from Tivoli to a smaller farm, Peggy made the arrangements and found the current farm in Marlboro, New York, so the older people who had spent their lives on CW farms could have a quieter retirement.

As an editor of the paper, she kept us all up to date on the United Farm Workers and other farm worker boycotts. Since she farmed herself at Tivoli, these issues were deeply personal for her. Terri Antholzner, probably Peggy's oldest friend, worked as a migrant farm worker in Florida, Washington and Vermont picking fruit after she left the Tivoli farm. Peggy took "clarification of thought" seriously. I recently reread some of the articles that she wrote for the paper. Not only was she an excellent writer, but she was also a keen thinker about the issues of the day. This is especially true of her discussion of homosexuality—an issue simply not discussed in our New York houses until Peggy tried to engage the community around this issue.

When Peggy left the Worker, she and Gary Donatelli went to Bailey House, a housing program for people who were dying of AIDS. As Deputy Administrator she honed her administrative skills. Her experiences at the Catholic Worker and Bailey House, she told her sister Courtney Petersen, "changed her life."

—Kathy Clarkson

Peggy was at the Worker during a critical time—the sale of the farm at Tivoli, the move of the residents to the new Peter Maurin Farm in Marlboro, and the transition between life with Dorothy and life at the Worker following Dorothy's death in 1980. She was a natural leader and organizer despite her quiet nature. Dorothy trusted her implicitly. Dorothy wrote

in her diary that Peggy was a prime mover in wanting to sell Tivoli. Peggy was key in the sale of the farm and in the purchase of a smaller farm across the Hudson from Poughkeepsie. Dorothy wrote a thank you note to Peggy's family for a book they had sent her. In the note she stated that she had taken a day off to read the book. "With Peggy around I can have many such 'days off.'"

Peggy and Dan Mauk were editors of the paper following the death of Dorothy and during the early days of the AIDS epidemic. After Dorothy died in 1980 there were many discussions within the Worker about the issue of homosexuality and the role of LGBT volunteers within the Worker, for the Worker had always had volunteers and guests from the LGBT community. This issue, however, provoked much tension, along with issues of authority, within the Worker. There were many hours of discussion, prayer and discernment. It was in this context that Peggy chose to leave the Worker. She left with a very heavy heart.

—Courtney Scherer Petersen

Peggy was a woman of deep faith. Not the resounding gong or clanging cymbal type. Not the boasting type. Not the preachy, proselytizing type nor the big screen, megachurch type. Hers was the kind of boots on the ground type. The actions-speak-louder-than-words type. Although her words, writings, articles, journals and editing were loud and strong—bold and fierce—her boots on the ground faith was unstoppable.

She had a grounding in her early Catholic upbringing, and, more specifically, in her twelve plus years at the Catholic Worker in their daily prayer, scripture and ritual. Faith in action was their covenant. That faith was more explicit, direct, done in the name of an inclusive and compassionate God. Peggy's heart bled for the poor, the homeless, the underserved, the marginalized. Peggy served tirelessly with a faith that moved mountains, created structures and operational imperatives, and, most importantly, amplified small voices while helping to tamp down loud voices that seemed unfair or unjust.

Deep in the cells of her faith was her passionate sense of justice, equity and fairness that coursed throughout her very fiber, yet was done without a sense of righteousness or judgment. While being interviewed about the ups and downs of the Catholic Worker or communal living, and the personalities and politics of any community, her answers were straightforward, honest, clean, not dismissive or assigning blame, but shrewd about the complexities of community, voluntary poverty, serving the highest good, and humility. Not ignoring challenges, but not criticizing them either. A true balance.

Whether a major decision about the future of the Catholic Worker farm at Tivoli, or a minor task of helping you with your computer—she did it with respect and dignity. Born from her faith and commitment to justice was her unwavering call to serve. Peggy was the true worker among workers. Helpful. Valuable. Integral. Indispensable. Beneficial to all she served. Always and in all ways. Whether serving with Dorothy Day or caring for her goats. Always and in all ways.

Dorothy Day once quoted Georges Bernanos that "hell is not to love". It's the Peggy Scherer, St. Thérèse, grateful-heart kind of love... dogged, determined, taking in the whole of life or whomever she loved and served...jagged edges and all. In her own heart must have echoed the words found in the Little Flowers of St. Francis: "This then is perfect joy!"

—Mary Tarbell-Green

Searching for Understanding

By PEGGY SCHERER

[Excerpted from "Searching for Understanding, Revisited." The original was published in *The Catholic Worker* October-November, 1985—Eds. Note]

In the fall of 1984, I wrote the first draft of an article that I hoped would result in discussion, education, perhaps healing, at the very least a beginning to speaking out. Using an article, I thought, might give us a way to talk a little more objectively, as well as provide a goal to publish something we could all stand behind. The discussion wasn't abstract, many among us were gay and lesbian. Some of them had told me of what they'd gone through: rejection by their families; being reviled from the pulpit and the priests in their churches. They'd been cursed, hated, suffered prejudice, and they feared (realistically) physical attacks. And they had experienced some of these things within the CW. While I expected some strong reaction, I wasn't fully prepared for what would unfold.

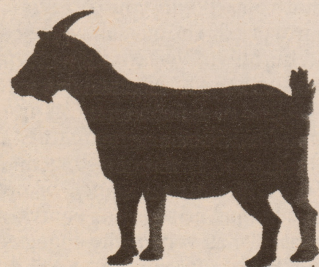
A great deal of activity unfolded over the following months. Some twenty-five of us engaged in the process. We talked, argued, listened, debated and cried, in large groups and small. We had days of reflection. Fr. Dan Berrigan prayed with us. Fr. John McNeill, one of the founders of Dignity, a Catholic gay organization, who was under restrictions because of his public ministry to gay people, celebrated Mass for us one evening shortly after the Vatican had put him under further restrictions. We prayed and we read. Some of us suggested we get a mediator to help us navigate this emotional exchange, but a few rejected such an idea out of hand. We pressed on.

The discussions were, to put it mildly, quite intense. Every person involved was kind, compassionate, committed, a person of faith—but each one of us experienced these deliberations differently, for it was indeed complex. The events of the larger world, and New York City itself, shaped some of the urgency in the conversations. Our discussions brought pain, for this was not some distant struggle, some theoretical "cause." It was very, very personal for everyone, gay or straight. What was sought was welcome and acceptance for who they were, not just tolerance. With those for whom there were strong theological differences, the hope was at least an agreement to disagree. But a few, it seemed, just wanted the topic to return to its hidden, silent niche—to the closet.

This being a Catholic group, sexuality of any kind wasn't much discussed. But there was a striking difference in the kind of treatment people got. When straight men and women connected and dated, joy for their happiness was expressed and shown. Not so with those who were gay. Were we practicing a double standard out of ignorance, and fear?

Often the conversations were tangled, and in ways that were unclear. Some only wanted to speak out for civil rights, others wanted to challenge Church teaching. And the undercurrent was how should we act in a post-Dorothy CW? We didn't have an honestly acknowledged process for making decisions on anything, much less this.

Looking back, there were many positive results as well. For a number of us, there was an increase in knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, acknowledgment of mistakes made, and a commitment to change. Some were relieved that we were at least talking.



Artist Unknown



Joan of Arc

Fritz Eichenberg

Some friendships deepened in a way they would not have otherwise. By breaking the silence to some degree, we grew.

Eventually, we agreed to publish two articles in the paper that would at least acknowledge the questions. So in October-November 1985, what by now was the fourth major version of "Homosexuality: Searching for Understanding" was published under my name, and Ernesto de la Vega penned a short but eloquent piece, "A Personal Testimony." He spoke of the rejection he had suffered as a gay man, including that from the Church, and the experiences of others he knew and worked with. And he captured well what all of us needed to face: "As a family, we cannot and must not ignore the cries of those who are gay. We would betray our very history if we did. Each one of us holds a different position...but the call to love, to help and to understand has always been a part of us, and this we must not forget if we are to continue on as a symbol of hope and new life." While the articles were fairly mild, we had made a start....

But over the following months, it was clear that some felt strongly that the topic should be discussed no more. One person said, "This could end the Catholic Worker." The fear, from what I could tell, was that even speaking out for gay rights might bring into question the CW's theological orthodoxy. While I did—and do—disagree, they were not alone in their views. At that point I felt their view would prevail.

By August of 1986, I decided to leave. Other issues had been raised over the previous year, decisions made about them with which I disagreed. I continued to question how decisions were made. Dorothy had clearly held authority, it was her movement and she never suggested that decisions be made by full consensus. Adopting a variation of her approach made sense to me: having a small group, seasoned, committed leaders, who had more authority than others. In fact, that is how it worked but it was not openly acknowledged. Those who made decisions needed to be honest about it, and thus be accountable for their views.

By December of 1986, I had followed Gary Donatelli to work at Bailey House, home for forty-four homeless men and women with AIDS, where the atmosphere was open and warm. People of every sexual orientation were welcomed, valued, respected for who they were. And that very openness meant sexuality was not an issue. How you lived and got along with each other was what mattered. I spent nearly five years at that wonderful, supportive program, and other Catholic Workers worked there too, including Walter Kerrell, whose warm welcome put many at ease. Since then I've done other interesting, challenging, worthwhile things, and happily found people with whom I shared the values I hold most dear. ❖

CARL KABAT, OMI 1933-2022

By CHRISSY KIRCHHOEFER

Consider this article invitational. It can be difficult to examine the multifaceted life of a complex person. Carl Kabat was a man of contradictions. He could play the role of the "fool," quote scripture and the social encyclicals verbatim to support the most serious of actions to stop nuclear annihilation which threatens life on Earth. Carl was certain of the insanity of atomic weapons in both their creation and existence. He recognized resources spent on weapons added further devastation to the poor that he experienced first hand. Carl called for investing in the world we want to live in.

The founding of the Plowshares movement and Carl's involvement in it has been well documented. Many people have recently read Carl's obituaries in the *National Catholic Reporter*, *Washington Post*, *New York Times* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

So much of Carl's fundamental orientation centered around rural southern Illinois where he and his four siblings were reared on a farm and developed an ethic of hard work—berry picking was permitted on Sundays because it was fun. The main weekend event was the polka dances in the largely Polish community. Carl was so fond of fishing that he kept a seine in his car at all times to cast a net for fish and convince someone to fry up the catch. He took great delight in playing baseball and being an avid lifelong Cardinals fan. He was an all-around natural athlete, wrestling in college and being on a champion basketball team (in prison) well into his sixties.

Some thirty-five years after Dorothy Day dropped out of the University of Illinois, Carl too dropped out of his pre-med program at the University of Illinois and followed his brother into the seminary. Fr. Carl Kabat was ordained a priest with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) in 1959. Some Oblates have shared with pride that their order was often asked by the Vatican to set up missions in some of the most economically devastated parts of the world.

Fr. Kabat's first overseas mission took him to the Philippines from 1965 to 1968 where he witnessed human suffering on a scale that expanded his worldview. The following year, Carl was sent to Brazil and encountered devastating poverty while his political eyes were opened. With companions such as Bishop Dom Helder Camara, Carl gained an awareness of social justice and liberation theology. He attempted to buffer working families from social as well as political repression.

He was determined to create spaces for people to come together and support each other. Much like in his younger years, the weekends were filled with music, food and dancing. Authorities in Brazil viewed Carl as a threat. The book **Prophets without Honor: A Requiem for Moral Patriotism** by William Strabala and Michael Palecek states that in 1973 Fr. Kabat "fled an arrest warrant in Brazil for inciting to revolution by conducting church socials and preaching that the kingdom of God starts here on Earth with human dignity."

When Carl returned to the US, he felt he was spinning his wheels, writing to all of the US bishops about what he witnessed in Brazil and attending national conferences such as Pax Christi's. He felt all the weight of what he was called to do, similar to Isaiah in the biblical quote, "Woe is me." In Baltimore he was given the address of the Jonah House, a community that was active in nonviolent direct action. Carl had found his home. Finding his community, Carl's "woe is me" was over.

Carl continued his missionary work when he left Jonah House and returned to the Midwest which had the largest concentration of nuclear weapons. His mentor Phillip Berrigan inquired why he was moving when the Pentagon was on the East Coast. Carl saw a need to spread the message to a wider public where the missiles were on hair trigger alert in silos beneath farmers' cornfields.

It is said that a prophet often is not recognized in his own home, country or church. Carl was fortunate to have found fellowship with a few Oblate brothers who had been radicalized by their different assignments throughout the

world. At one point there were at least four OMI priests in prison for intentional nonviolent public resistance to evil actions. Fathers Carl, his brother, Paul Kabat, Larry (Lorenzo) Rosebaugh and Darrell Rupiper were all in prison at the same time. For some in the Church's hierarchy this was an embarrassment.

In contrast, Fr. Luis Valbuena, OMI, who served as Councilor for Latin America at the Vatican and traveled extensively to the Oblate missions in Latin America in the 1970s, shared how the Vatican was following Carl's activities in Brazil and his subsequent nonviolent actions against militarism in the US. Fr. Valbuena said that there was substantial respect and encouragement within the Vatican and with other Oblates for taking the message of the social encyclicals so seriously.

In 2013, Carl's provincial Fr. Bill Antone was arrested with twenty-three others at the nuclear weapons plant in Kansas City where Carl had been resisting for years. At a gathering prior to the action, nearly a hundred people gathered in a circle to share what the influence of Carl's nearly eighty years on earth meant to them. One person responded, "I learned from Carl to expect hospitality everywhere I go!" Carl really was at home with himself and his role in the world. His last arrest at that facility was in July 2019.

Like so many Catholic Worker relationships, ours started over coffee when Carl was getting oriented to peace and justice groups after moving into Karen House in St. Louis. In 2002 we named a CW house after him to focus on resistance to militarism. When we asked Carl what his thoughts were about naming the house, he let us know that there was already a Carl Kabat Haus in Germany.

When some Oblates lamented that there were not younger people coming into the ministry, Carl responded that there were young people living out the Works of Mercy in the Catholic Worker houses and outside of the confines of religious life. In the spirit of All Saints and All Souls, Carl saw that there were many paths to witnessing the Holy One. The thing Carl missed most about prison was being invited by Indigenous inmates to sweat lodge ceremonies; he took that honor seriously and continued to pray in that way outside of prison.

Baptism in the Church calls each of us to be priest and prophet and to cloak ourselves in the dignity of royalty. Carl fully lived those roles. It was an honor for me to witness Carl holding onto that dignity in his last months and days. He never wanted to be put on a pedestal but he did model a way of living. He had found what he was 110% passionate about and encouraged others to find theirs.

One of my cherished memories of Carl, and there are many, was sitting next to him at the play **And Carl Laughed** written by high school students about his life. When it was originally performed in St. Louis and taken to the international stage at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2007, Fr. Kabat was in prison in Terre Haute. They did a special performance for Carl when he was released. I held his hand throughout the play as he cried, watching his life artistically expressed before his eyes. At the conclusion of the play with tears in his eyes he embraced the teenagers, who seemed to really get the message of his life, to tell them how proud he was of them.

Carl was a man of few words and the words he chose were instructions on life. He did not proselytize. Carl would often say he did not become wise to the ways of the world until well into his forties. He went out of his way to show his support to others who took a similar path and joyfully shared in that sacred work.

"He was doing what the Church was calling for with the social encyclicals. He took it literally, and did it," said his sister Mary Ann Radake. At Carl's Mass of remembrance there was mention of Pope Francis' statements on nuclear weapons on the remembrance of Hiroshima as well as potential nuclear catastrophe in Ukraine. Carl made the Church relevant in these present times. Carl was known to conclude prayers by saying "Amen and Awoman." ❖

From the Book of Notes

By RIC RHETOR

When in the course of human events the world does not look like it's being saved by beauty, throw in that hot towel of anger and angst, turn off your favorite listening device and pray without ceasing. Of course, one of the hardest things we learn as we mature is that prayer is not magic, and there's no guarantee all will look any better when the davening is done and the rosary is recited. And yet there are fewer things as beautiful as a man selling his merch from a cart on a downtown street corner, pausing to roll out his prayer rug, then kneeling upon it and slowly bowing in devotion until his forehead touches the carpeted pavement.

So glad to see Liam back after his time of retreat and meditation with the ecumenical Taizé community of France. Liam studies at Union Theological Seminary here in New York and although he has a pretty full schedule, he manages to jump down here on his bike, about a forty-five minute ride from the Upper West Side; Bill O., for his part, rides down here from East Harlem, a little shorter distance since we, too are on the East Side, but in the lower quadrant. And then there's Damian, who helps out on Wednesday nights, biking all the way out to Queens at the end of his day.

Many a New York CWer bikes thru the crowded, congested and wacky city streets with helmets, while others consider them encumbrances to a smooth, cool ride. Bad thinking, to say the least, and pretty reminiscent of the Covid mask controversies. But let's just shout out all the bikers anyway, from Michael to Gerry, to Amanda, Amy and Annie M. and anyone in between who supports a sound means of transportation when possible, and those like Michael who also use low-tech hand carts for lightweight schleps from our local and wonderful supporters. And of course, there's Felton, running our compost a few blocks over in a handtruck to a neighborhood collection center. Kudos, one and all, and stay safe as you maneuver the curbs and core of the Big Apple!

Besides the anniversary month of May, perhaps the months of October and November are the most significant times of the year in the spiritual life of the CW. Of course, times change, and special feast days are added as time marches on—or removed. Remember St. Christopher? But they weren't actually desainted (sounds a little like stripping your floors) just downgraded, claims Christopher Bellito, a medieval scholar at Kean University in New Jersey.

The very first day of October begins with St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who some would claim as the most significant for the daily grind of CW life—in short, how to be kind, patient and cheerful when that special someone splashes water your way out of spite or anger or perhaps jealousy—aka the “doctrine” of the Little Way. (see her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*; but don't stop there with this almost apocryphal story, check out *Her Last Conversations*, too.) As Pat Jordan is known to say about Dorothy, Thérèse of Lisieux was “the genuine article.” She had profound spiritual insights, relatively uncommon in someone who died at the tender age of twenty-four. She was a natural and savvy biblical reader who was eventually named a Doctor of the Church. There are four women Doctors—Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila and Thérèse—the only women out of thirty-seven.

In the same month, on the 15th, is the feast of St. Teresa of Avila who, like the Little Flower, as Thérèse of Lisieux was known, was a member of the Carmelite order. Teresa was a reformer in the 16th century Church. But now it feels like were getting into the Theresian weeds, since the great Francis of Assisi has not been mentioned yet, and his feast day is a mere three days after Thérèse—and he could be considered one of the beloved

saints of the CW, too. Over the years, many have come to us from the Franciscans, and many have made the journey from the CW to the Franciscans.

In more recent times, we think of Brothers Paul Fesefeldt and Gabriel Conlon, OFM Cap, pushing brooms, making soup and tending to the sick and dying here in our houses of hospitality, and then leaving for religious studies and vows. And we don't want to forget our ally and labor scholar, Brother Anthony Zuba, OFM Cap, frequent participant at our Friday Night Meetings and social justice events. Thing is all three of these guys are New Yorkers, now up in the Boston area—yikes! Seriously folks, keep them in your prayers.

It's always a surprise to see just how many canonized people there are on the calendar, and thank goodness there are moves to see more saints of color take their rightful place—not on some sort of separate and highly unequal rota of religious Black people. Yes, there is Martin de Porres on November 3rd, Charles Lwanga and his companions in Uganda, but many are yet to be known. It should be obvious that St. Martin has been one of the Catholic Worker faves with houses named for him over the years including one in San Francisco. There is a movement to advance the cause of six saintly US people of color. (See CW Mar-Apr, 2022)



Ade Bethune

When we start November, we realize that it's the month that covers all those unnamed saints under the November 1st All Saints banner. We have this abundance (which certainly seems a bit heavy in the male holy ones department) come November, and yet for the CW movement, November is the month not only of Dorothy Day's birth anniversary, but her death anniversary as well. We remember the person who, along with Peter Maurin, got us all here in the first place, and we are glad indeed!

The latter part of the year revs up our spiritual motors and sends us on for the work that she and Peter hoped would create a world where it would be easier to be good. Its not just to do good, but to be that person you want that other fellow to be, to paraphrase the man Dorothy called “my teacher,” to do the Works of Mercy including the welcoming the stranger, the burying the dead. May God give us the grace to continue.

Late summer visitors included three Jesuits starting school at Fordham. Brian,

Angelo and Beau, we wish you all the best and ask for your prayers. There were folks from the Cleveland CW whom Carla visited with while doing work on the newspaper, and then she had a wonderful visit with a friend from Germany, Georg, and it gave Bill G. a chance to speak that beautiful but most maligned of languages.

Oh, remember up above when we mentioned Brother Paul, OFM? Well, he dropped by while in the City for another friar's vows ceremony. Then we had the visit from John LaForge and Marion Küpker, here for the UN disarmament conference. John was pretty depressed as he assessed the worth of such conferences, but they are so delightful as guests that we hope it made up for it. Chris Spicer stayed with us as well while attending the conference, too.

Bernie went up to Toronto for a quick visit to former NYCWer Jo Roberts. Jo who authored *Contested Land, Contested Memory* lives with Claire, a primary school teacher. Bernie and Jo were able to do a few walkabouts to the lake. Tess got out to her birthplace of way far away Montana for about a month. Lyn and Hideko also got out of the city in August.

This summer brought a cluster of deaths in our more immediate community, including some who lived at our houses. There was Albert, who lived at St. Joe's, and whose tender care by Phil, Deb, Dan and Annie perhaps prolonged his life. He died up at Beth Israel. Theresa Harrigan died up at Bellevue somewhat suddenly, though after being in and out of various hospitals and nursing homes for the past year.

Jean Walsh who was close to the Worker in the 50s and 60s died in August. Her niece Mary Beth sent us a copy of the eulogy she gave at Jean's funeral. May all rest in peace and the angels guide all to new life.

And our hearts are still heavy over the death of Tom Cornell, in the waning days of a hot summer. Tom gave many years to the CW, both as a young peace activist and later as an elder statesman of the movement. His death at eighty-eight is bittersweet. We continue to, offer our sympathy to Monica, Tom Jr., Deirdre, Kenney, grandchildren Rachel, Thomas, Seamus, Rebecca and Rosa, as well as our friendship and solidarity.

Several of us were able to get up to Marlboro, NY for the wake and funeral. David, Carmen, Joanne and Jane were there for the beautiful wake held inside St. Mary's Church—a good chance to meet up with other Catholic Workers from around the country, and to visit with Tom's family. The following day was the funeral, solemn though replete with moments of poignancy. Carmen, Trevor and Bill O. served as pallbearers and scores of people attended. Michael Baxter gave a heartfelt and at times humorous account of Tom as one of the founders of the Catholic Peace Fellowship followed by thunderous applause in acknowledgement of the modest and highly accomplished Monica Ribar Cornell.

The parish and many friends of the Cornells and the CW laid out a sumptuous reception. At the end of this repast food was packed up and sent down to the city houses thanks to Joanne Sheehan and company. Through all the sighs and sorrows, one could sense the beloved community and the words of the psalmist, “How good it is and how pleasant, where brothers and sisters dwell in unity.”

We have all sorts of reasons to grouse about the social media platforms, but you can be buoyed up by the text of a fellow traveler who gives an energy boost with a kind word or an inspiring quotation from another—recently Joanne found this Dorothy Day meme: “Paperwork, cleaning the house, dealing with visitors who come all through the day, answering the phone, keeping patience and acting intelligently, which is to find some meaning in all that happens—these things, too, are the works of peace.” God's blessings on you, Dorothy. Deo Gratias!

Morning Meditations

By CARMINE PULERA

In my cupboard, there is an assortment of mugs. Some were gifts, some acquired as souvenirs, some bought to support a charity. Others feature a corporate logo, a witty saying, or offend an aesthetic or moral sensibility. Yet, one stands out. It arrests my attention as I sip coffee at sunrise. And inextricably, it links one of the Church's most profound theologians, Thomas Aquinas, whose *Summa Theologica* is a cornerstone of Catholic thought, to the co-founder of the Catholic Worker, Dorothy Day. As I draw the mug closer to my lips, its Latin inscription *Non Nisi Te Domine* (Nothing But You, Lord) provides focus for life.

The link between Aquinas and Day, at first barely tenable, becomes manifest upon deeper thought. Day engaged the world, tackling social imbalance: poverty, pay inequality, racism, gender discrimination and war. All of which became subjects for *The Catholic Worker* newspaper, whose editors continue to prick our consciences, asking us what we have concretely done to address these issues. And it is Aquinas who helped illuminate our consciences so that we could address them. He pointed out how infusing our natural virtues with supernatural ones, especially that of charity or love, would lead us to union with God. Both Day and Aquinas fueled their passions through intense prayer.

As Day transitioned from a secularist to one devoting her life to corporal Works of Mercy, the inner wellspring of her energy that allowed her to follow Christ was her abiding sense of the necessity of prayer. She intuited that prayer and meditation gave both meaning and direction to her work. Aquinas, too, understood how all of our endeavors must involve contemplation of what Christ asks of us.

Much of the monastic tradition recognized that the authentic sustenance of life-affirming acts demanded prayer and reflection. The motto of St. Benedict's order, *Ora et Labora* (Prayer and Work), emphasizes this point. Day was a Third Order Benedictine. She believed in voluntary poverty, she preached it, she practiced it, and she lived it not for its own sake but as a means to follow Christ. Truly, Christian poverty lived authentically and courageously is a powerful witness for Christ.

I attend Mass at St. Vincent Ferrer, an uptown church staffed by the Dominicans, the order to which Aquinas belonged. Like their forerunners, the friars give sermons steeped in both earthly and divine wisdom, practical yet spiritual. The liturgies are never rushed. Before evening Mass, the rosary and vespers are recited. And what always captures my attention is the long line of penitents waiting before the confessional. It is prayer centered.

As backstory, one day I was listening to a podcast in which a Dominican was being interviewed. I Googled the podcast and found items for sale that might interest subscribers. Most were kitsch. The simple white coffee mug with its Latin inscription *Non Nisi Te Domine*, however, intrigued me, so I looked up its history. Tradition has it Aquinas was in tears praying before the crucifix. Another friar, Blessed Dominic of Caserta, who had hidden himself in a closet of the chapel, recounted a story of Christ speaking from the cross to Aquinas. “You have written well of me. What reward will you receive from me for your work?” Thomas answered succinctly and humbly: “*Non Nisi Te Domine*.” Do I believe the legend? No. Does it matter? No. Do I believe Aquinas lived his life by that response? Yes. Does that matter? Yes. The answers are that both the story and its message reflect the importance of never forgetting to keep Christ as our central and guiding force in whatever activity engages us.

As to the three coffee mugs I purchased,

one I gave to the Dominican whose sermons and friendship have drawn me closer to Christ. Another, I gave to a young man who was entering the Dominican novitiate. The last one I enjoy daily, including today, as I sip coffee writing this reflection. After the final drop, I will gingerly wash the coffee mug with the breakfast dishes and place it on the counter to dry. This act allows the sentiment of Aquinas's response to linger with me all day.

Why is this so? Did not the nuns in elementary school teach us the aspiration, "All for thee, Jesus?" Why also do I now recall St. Augustine of Hippo who said, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord! And our hearts are restless till they rest in you?" Both these quotes, once sidelined by the cares of the world, have been refreshed by Aquinas's reply to Christ. What is it about *Non Nisi Te Domine* that compels me to reevaluate and to reinforce my relationship with Christ?

The real question I gather is how should I respond to its meaning when I am angry, frustrated, disheartened or confused. Again, I think of Day's life and how it embodied the essence of Aquinas's response. Day, as she matured, found purpose and meaning imbuing the values Christ gave us. Again, I consider Aquinas who illuminated the path we ought to follow to see the face of God.

This inexpensive coffee mug has allowed me to re-experience God's grace within me. It is a small morning reminder to begin the day with Christ at the center of my prayers and my work. St. Thomas Aquinas, pray for us. St. Dorothy Day, pray for us. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. ✚



William Hart McNichols

What we would like to do is change the world—make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And to a certain extent, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute—the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor in other words, we can to a certain extent change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world....

We repeat, there is nothing that we can do but love, and dear God please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as well as our friend.

Dorothy Day—Love is the Measure

CW & Poor People's Campaign

By TESS GALLAGHER CLANCY

Find a protest or march in the Northeast against poverty, militarism, or a host of interrelated issues, and Catholic Workers will most likely be there. They're not that noticeable—they usually don't have matching t-shirts, uniforms, or collars—but people who are part of Worker communities, or inspired by this movement, have been seeding the ranks of resistance, protest and community care for the better part of the twentieth, and the entire twenty-first century.

On June 18, 2022, plenty of Workers made their way to Washington, DC to participate in the Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' Assembly and Moral March on Washington, led by the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. As a student at Union Theological Seminary for the past three years, I had a chance to see some of the workings of the Poor People's Campaign (PPC) up close. Throughout this article I make two main arguments: First, I want to explain how I think the PPC and the Catholic Worker movement can learn from and inform each other. Second, I argue that both movements have a lot of discernment ahead of them as they identify what kind of tactics and community we must enact to meet the scale of suffering in our world, and create tangible, lasting change for poor and working people.

Although most Catholic Workers do not claim to be organizers like the PPC, many do claim a larger vision of creating a different kind of world within the shell of the current, "rotten, decadent, putrid industrial capitalist system that breeds such suffering...." (Dorothy Day, *The Catholic Worker*, September 1956) Many Catholic Workers oppose this system through the Little Way, and for many, including Dorothy Day, through solidarity activism.

The current iteration of the Poor People's Campaign picked up the mantle from the 1968 Poor People's Campaign, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.'s project, to move beyond civil rights to address what they called the "interlocking evils" of poverty, racism and militarism. Reverend Drs. William Barber and Liz Theoharris resurrected the PPC in 2018 to rebuild a coalition movement of poor and working people. They expanded the original three interlocking evils of poverty, racism, and militarism, to include ecological devastation and the false moral narrative of white, Christian nationalism.

Dr. King recognized that despite legislative civil rights wins, racism was going nowhere as long as economic exploitation continued to plague people in the United States and around the world. Dr. King had a lot to learn from anti-poverty organizers, many of them women of color, but the Poor People's Campaign fizzled with King's assassination in April 1968.

On June 18, 2022 people from around the country gathered in DC for a day-long rally condemning the economy of greed we suffer under, and demanding that our government provide living wages, free healthcare and affordable housing. They demanded climate action, an end to the egregious funding of the war economy, access to reproductive justice, and reparations for slavery and Indigenous genocide. They insisted on the role of the economy, capital and wealth in keeping so many people exploited and alienated from

one another.

The Poor People's Campaign has built a truly diverse coalition, shown by the people present in DC. The campaign's ability to reach people with a range of experiences and ideological commitments is a rare accomplishment. After the march, however, I'm left with the same question that I came with: What's the plan when the people who run your government are unwilling or unable to enact your demands? When do we decide that it's time to expand our tactics, especially with an increasingly unengaged electorate?

The Catholic Worker's foundation, as I understand it, is in seeking the ability for all people to live in freedom. Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day practiced a Christian anarchism, recognizing that although we must always tacitly support social programs and leadership that lessen the suffering of our family, the modern state is not a vehicle for the freedom that people so desperately need. The state does not function according to the laws of God, but according to the will of whoever holds power.

The vision of human freedom that the Catholic Worker strives toward is a positive one. It doesn't have a plan for people's lives to exist according to a model laid out by society; it doesn't ask merely for people to have the right to work a nine-to-five job and make a living wage. The freedom it envisions is one in which the negative freedoms—freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom from poverty, war, gross exploitation—are no-brainers given the larger vision of human freedom. That is what a world free from the prison of capitalist exploitation is: one in which we reopen the possibilities that the modern capitalist state has foreclosed to most people, so we can structure our common life together.

The Poor People's Campaign has built a cutting and comprehensive critique of the conditions of our modern capitalist economy and state, and its ability to bring such a diverse array of people into a movement with such analysis is unlike anything I have seen or heard of in the twenty-first century. However, as I stood at the rally in DC on June 18th, I couldn't help but think about how little energy I had to be in the nation's capital, begging people who don't or can't care to get on board with the will of the people. The state will band-aid capitalist exploitation when it can politically afford to, and will allow the people to suffer when it can't. The state will bolster police and militaries to deal with the people because it is unwilling to take any actions that would threaten the profits and existence of capitalism.

The Poor People's Campaign spends most of its energy demanding our rights to be free from many exploitations, and crucial parts of its platform are voting rights and legislative efforts. However, without more space and attention given to constituencies that focus on positive freedom, such as what the Catholic Worker movement envisions, it will have a hard time dealing with the increasing repression and tyranny of a state beginning to lock itself down for the coming climate disasters, war and apartheid. Without a more radical wing, it will likely find itself outpaced as it spends much of its energy on getting people to vote, for almost inevitably people will fail to enact serious change in a failing democracy.

The Catholic Worker movement should take some cues from the Poor People's Campaign, too. Many Workers think and write about the present conditions we live in, and how the ethos of the Worker should best address our present, but most Workers don't have the power or sway that Peter and Dorothy did within the movement. The Poor People's Campaign is neck-deep in the current conditions, and the testimonies of the poor and marginalized. They want to build power because they know that without organizing the people, there will be widespread suffering. They cry, "You only get what

you're organized to take!" The Worker provides a slice of some other world we could create together, but without involvement, or sometimes even openness to participating in a larger coalition of solidarity organizing and resistance, it will likely be unable to bring in and hold onto a younger generation.

Both the Catholic Worker and the Poor People's Campaign found their footing in the twentieth century, and without the work of our forebearers and our leaders shaped by these movements, we would be lost today. The times are changing, though, and young people have lived through the tides of a new era. We face questions about the possibilities of life on earth for many people and creatures; we face the certainty of extreme social upheaval from climate chaos in our lifetimes. We understand the interconnectedness of our lives with people halfway around the world through a racialized hierarchy of globalized capital and production, and we feel helpless to extract ourselves from its tentacles. We yearn for real community and deeper ties with each other but feel helpless to combat the fracturing of our communities, the forced homogenization of our cultures, and our alienation from one another through corporate-owned technology and surveillance.



Rita Corbin

The time has come to allow us to wonder together what approaches for building solidarity need to look like in our present conditions. A good place to start would be for both movements to expand our understanding of the breadth of pacifism. Resistance to capitalist exploitation requires a range of strategies and tactics, and while it doesn't make sense for everyone to participate in every tactic, both the CW and the PPC should allow conversations about what tactics are allowed in the movement, and for the Worker in particular, how its resources should aid resistance movements whether or not they follow a particular understanding of pacifism. For people who are serious about solidarity with the oppressed, and serious about resistance, we should allow, support or participate in a range of tactics to resist apartheid and fascism. That includes an expansion of the meaning of pacifism and nonviolent resistance to police forces which use force and violence to harm and kill people, particularly poor people and people of color.

If Jesus' mission is the glue that binds together Catholics and Catholicism across time, place and culture, I think we need to take seriously an understanding of Jesus' life from the perspective of liberation theology: that Jesus wanted to bring the Israelites together to oppose the exploitative Roman empire and its economy. He wanted to get the Roman boot off the necks of his people, and as far as the Biblical record shows, he talked about a variety of methods to do that. Failing to build power and solidarity meant more suffering and death, and ultimately, for him, that came to pass. I think Catholic Workers and the Poor People's Campaign understand what we're up against because we see it in the people we live with or serve, and we hear it in the testimonies of our people. We understand the stakes, and I want these movements to meet those stakes with clear-eyed engagement around the many ways our movements need to be able and willing to resist together. ✚

BOOK REVIEW

THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING: A New History of Humanity by David Graeber and David Wengrow. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, New York 2021. Reviewed by Nathan Albright. A longer version can be found at Hamptonthink.org.

Before his sudden death in September of 2020, two weeks after the completion of his final book, *The Dawn of Everything*, the beloved anthropologist David Graeber had demonstrated a knack for writing about the right thing at the right time. In 2011, his masterwork *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, an inquiry into the relationship between debt, morality and political power, was published just a few months before Occupy Wall Street began an international conversation on much of the same. In addition to authoring the book and other writings that circulated in that movement, Graeber was actively involved from the beginning of the encampment, participating in direct actions and assembly meetings, and famously coining the Occupy mantra, "We Are the 99%."

In 2013, Graeber again struck a chord with a short article titled, "On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs," in which he batted around a few ideas about how a surprising number of jobs seem to be "utterly meaningless," even to those working them, and speculated that this kind of work had become more widespread than is openly talked about. In 2018, Graeber expanded the article, and combined it with the testimonies that readers had sent him, along with some of his past writing on gendered labor, authority, bureaucracy and imagination, into what became his most accessible and widely read book, *Bullshit Jobs*. Its main themes, especially his willingness to question what work is actually necessary, foreshadowed many of the discussions that took shape during the the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic as the public found itself split into essential and non-essential workers.

In 2005, long before Graeber amassed much of a readership, he wrote a pamphlet titled *Fragments of an Anarchist anthropology*, which, maybe more than any other work, serves as a prequel to his final publication. In the pamphlet he asks: if anthropology is the academic field most familiar with the variety of social arrangements that have existed without structures of domination—those which have valued cooperation over competition, creativity over conformity, and autonomy over obedience—why does it, as a discipline, so rarely engage with social movements that are, sometimes rather aimlessly, trying to recreate just such conditions? Graeber concluded the pamphlet with a call for his fellow anthropologists to make common cause with social movements because, in short, "we have tools at our fingertips that could be of enormous importance for human freedom." That same year, Yale University controversially declined to renew his teaching

contract, a move that many saw as retaliation for his political affiliations.

Sixteen years later, the posthumous release of *The Dawn of Everything*, coauthored with the archeologist David Wengrow, shows that the incident only sharpened Graeber's resolve to actualize the kind of anarchist anthropology his pamphlet had envisioned, and to do so in a way that could not be ignored. According to Wengrow, Graeber insisted on publishing each section of the book individually in peer reviewed journals before releasing the full compilation in order to head off any efforts to dismiss their findings. What the two present in the volume is a radically different vision of human history, an attempt to broaden our understanding of what we, as a species, have been, that is as doggedly hopeful as it is rigorously researched.

Graeber and Wengrow set out from one of the oldest questions in the social sciences: "What is the origin of inequality?" They begin by turning the question on its head, instead asking, how is it that social theorists of 18th century Europe came to be interested in the idea of inequality in the first place? The answer, they suggest, is simple: although Enlightenment thinking is often framed as the unique brainchild of individual European male genius, it was actually the result of an explosion of cultural exchange following first contact with the Indigenous peoples of the Americas who had exposed Europeans to entirely different ways of thinking and living. Moreover, Indigenous intellectuals like the Huron-Wendat Chief Kandiarok (who the authors profile at length in the second chapter) were so horrified by the hierarchy, competitiveness and poverty permeating European culture that they leveled scathing critiques of the inequalities they witnessed.

The popularity of this Indigenous critique left European pride bruised, and the authors suggest that reactionary thinkers, scrambling for counter-arguments to protect their sense of superiority, developed lines of thinking that have endured to the present day. Thomas Hobbes essentially argued that Indigenous people were equal only in so far as they were equally poor and stupid, that life for the so-called uncivilized was a vicious war of all against all and modern powers vested in governments were the only thing keeping people from tearing each other apart—reasoning that remains the bedrock of conservative thought. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, on the other hand, painted Indigenous people as coming from a utopian state of innocence, totally unaware of inequality and uncorrupted by the kinds of inevitable technological advances, like agriculture, which had forced Europeans to lose touch with their own Eden.

While both formulations are patently false and racist in their own unique ways, the authors note that Rousseau was not wrong in observing that something had been lost in European culture that clearly did exist among Indigenous groups. Settlers, when exposed to Indigenous ways of life, overwhelmingly chose to remain, or even to return after failing to reintegrate into European society. Indigenous Americans brought to European society, on the other hand, would invariably seek every opportunity to escape and return home. Even European children separated from their parents and brought to Indigenous communities would often choose to stay.

Some of the details the authors cover won't be new to a student of anthropology: medieval serfs worked significantly less hours than the modern office or factory worker, and "the hazelnut gatherers and cattle herders who dragged great slabs to build Stonehenge almost certainly worked less than that." The first instances of farming looked a lot more like gardening and were carried out with little effort, often in delta regions where seasonal floods would do most of the work of tilling, fertilizing and irrigating—such liminal farming spaces also had a sort of built-in resistance to measurement, allotment or enclosure. The first farmers in these spaces, it seems, were women, and they often grew herbs or ornamental crops rather than food staples

as had once been assumed. The authors use the term "play farming" to describe this millennia long process of leisurely experimentation and learning.

More to the point, Graeber and Wengrow want to get one thing straight—the advent of agriculture was not the revolutionary social, political, cultural catalyst it has been heralded to be. How a group of people obtains its food doesn't determine how it is politically or hierarchically structured. In fact, pre-agricultural life was not made up of roving bands of hunter gatherers, but "marked, in many places, by sedentary villages and towns, some by then already ancient, as well as monumental sanctuaries and stockpiled wealth, much of it the work of ritual specialists, highly skilled artisans and architects." Similarly the authors dispel the idea that greater scale, of a city for example, necessarily results in greater hierarchy. This revelation upends an assumption so widespread that is long been considered common sense.

Cities populated by tens of thousands began appearing around the world roughly six thousand years ago and there is surprisingly little evidence of any kind of hierarchy among them. Neither, it seems, were they dependent on a rural population to supply their needs, but instead relied on forms of subsistence gardening, animal husbandry, fishing, and continued hunting and gathering in surrounding areas. Graeber and Wengrow provide examples of self-governing cities from regions around the world including Ukraine, Turkey, China, central Mexico, Mesopotamia, the Fertile Crescent, the Indus Valley and others. The evidence that most of these early cities were non-hierarchically organized is so compelling the authors argue that the burden of proof is now on those trying to find evidence for hierarchy.

Life in these early cities, the authors write, was one grand social experiment: large public works projects, public housing, elaborate city planning, monuments, temples and more, all before the widespread adoption of farming. In many of the largest early cities, the grandest projects, centrally located, elaborately adorned and monumentally constructed, appear to have been public meeting spaces, likely for citizens' assemblies, neighborhood councils, and any number of other forms of direct democracy. "In fact," the authors write, "it is almost impossible to find a city anywhere in the Near East that did not have some equivalent to a popular assembly—or often several assemblies... even... where traditions of monarchy ran deep."

The authors describe a world of constant experimentation and fluidity in the structures that did exist. Some groups, for instance, transitioned from short term rigid hierarchy during a hunting season, to total egalitarian relations during the next. The result of such fluid experimentation seems to have been a much more accepting, creative populace, where eccentricities were celebrated, and individuals could change identities, kin, even names from season to season as a spirit of perpetual reinvention and regeneration flourished. Far from Rousseau's naive state

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of innocence, the Indigenous people of the Americas were keenly aware of the dangers of hierarchy and had become adept at the art of heading off any signs of individuals amassing coercive power.

The evidence suggests that this fluidity of social forms and an avoidance of hierarchy, alien as it may now seem, were characteristic of most social life for most of human history. The authors suggest that perhaps the most guarded values common to all people were autonomy (the complete freedom of the individual from domination by others) and communism ("from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs")—one serving as the necessary precondition for the other. Far from the realm of idealistic fantasy, these were the social relations in cities of hundreds of thousands of people who self-governed for periods of thousands of years. For the majority of human history, throughout the majority of the world, except for islands of hierarchy, people tended to resist domination and instead live in voluntary associations of mutual support.

A book with such an inspiring reinterpretation of human possibility, written by an author who has on more than one occasion presaged social movements, is a glimmer of hope in a very dark time. As Wildcat Workers Unions, Tenant's Unions, Citizens' Assemblies, and Mutual Aid Networks are blossoming around the country, participants must wonder on what scale this kind of grassroots self-organization is possible. What kind of a social movement could take form armed with the knowledge of the full spectrum of social forms throughout human history? Could humanity's oldest values, autonomy and mutual-aid, flourish again? Can the violence and rot of capitalist empire really be undone? If a reader takes one thing from *The Dawn of Everything*, Graeber and Wengrow want it to be this: nothing in history was ever predetermined. Neither Hobbes' mindless automatons nor Rousseau's innocent children of Eden ever existed. History is alive with self-conscious actors, constantly negotiating the conditions of their lives and with far more possible outcomes than we were ever led to believe. But more importantly, so is the present. ✦

FRIDAY NIGHT MEETINGS

In keeping with Peter Maurin's recognition of the need for ongoing clarification of thought, we invite you to join us for our weekly Friday Night Meetings. The meetings are held at Maryhouse, 55 East Third St., between First and Second Avenues. Feel welcome to call and confirm the schedule (212) 777-9617. Masks will be available.

- Nov. 4John Loughery: Dorothy Day—The Early Years.
- Nov. 11Jim Robinson: The Prophetic Legacy of Rosemary Radford Reuther.
- Nov. 18Kathleen Brady: Francis and Clare—The Struggles of the Saints of Assisi.
- Nov. 25No Meeting—Happy Thansgiving!
- Dec. 2Liam Myers: Taizé—A Parable of Communion.
- Dec. 9Jeremiah Moss: Feral City—On Finding Liberation in Lockdown New York.
- Dec. 16Catholic Worker Christmas Party—Please Join Us!
- Dec. 23No Meeting—Merry Christmas!
- Dec. 30No Meeting—Happy New Year!

MEETINGS BEGIN AT 8:00 PM



M J Gosiak